

WEST LAFAYETTE TRAFFIC COMMISSION
WEST LAFAYETTE CITY BUILDING
WEST LAFAYETTE, INDIANA

TIME: 5:00 pm, Wednesday, November 15, 2006

PLACE: West Lafayette City Council Room

PRESENT:	Evan Apotheker	John Cox	Kumares Sinha
	Bob Bauman	David Downey	Boudewijn van Gelder
	Dave Buck	Carrie Ehresman	John Walker
	David Christian	Gil Satterly	

VISITORS:	Ramzi Awwad	David Hudde	Barry Rubin
	Wendy Field	Jim Knapp	Curt Slyder
	Brandon Fulk	Laszlo Kovacs	Natalie Villwock
	Jeromy Grenard	Ross Nixon	Andrea Wellnitz
	Steve Hardesty	Karen O'Farrell	

Chairman Sinha determined there was quorum and called the meeting to order. Mr. Bauman made a motion to approve the August and October minutes, Captain Walker seconded. The minutes were approved as written.

NEW BUSINESS:

06-15 Kitty's Corner – South Salisbury Street Closure Request

Mr. Barry Rubin, with Carbin Development, brought to the commission a request to close a portion of South Salisbury Street for utility work. This closure would run from south of the east/west alley by State Street Towers to the intersection of Wood and S. Salisbury Street, and would close the street from December 18, 2006 – January 5, 2007. The closure would coincide with Purdue's semester break.

Mr. Rubin stated that traffic would be routed to the alleys, and no existing building access would be restricted. Mr. Downey commented that Mr. Rubin would need to guarantee that a 12' travel lane would be maintained for the alley detour, and asked that Mr. Rubin coordinate this with Michael Lin, developer of Linwood.

Mr. Buck asked if S. Salisbury Street could be left open if parking was removed. Mr. Rubin replied that it might be possible. It was agreed that leaving Salisbury open was the preferred option. Mr. van Gelder made a motion to remove six parking spaces and leave the S. Salisbury Street open. If that is not possible, the City Engineer, police and fire will come up with an alternative detour. Mr. Satterly seconded, and the motion carried.

06-16 Roundabout Presentation

Mr. Jeromy Grenard, Assistant City Engineer, made a presentation to the commission regarding the design and safety of roundabouts. Mr. Grenard defined a "modern roundabout" as having the three key features; a yield at entry, deflection of the entering vehicle's path, and an entry flare. Mr. Grenard also listed several key benefits of roundabouts; they keep traffic moving, they are aesthetically pleasing, they create less pollution and they are safer than conventional intersections. Each roundabout design is unique to its surroundings. Vehicle speeds and the negotiation of a design vehicle around a roundabout are some of the most important considerations for roundabout design. Other considerations include capacity, signs and pavement markings, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

According to the 2001 Insurance Institute for Highway Safety Study, fatalities are reduced by 90% with the use of roundabouts when compared to conventional intersections. Injury crashes are also reduced by 80%, and all crashes are reduced by 40%. Reduced vehicle speeds, reduced number of driver decisions, reduced speed differentials between drivers, and reduced number of conflict points are just a few of the reasons roundabouts are so safe when compared to conventional intersections.

Mr. Grenard opened the discussion to questions and Mr. Laszlo Kovacs expressed his concern that the city learn from their past mistakes and use the taxpayer's money in the best way possible. He was not against the city installing a roundabout, but wanted to make sure it was functional and economical.

Chairman Sinha had concerns with regard to pedestrian safety. Specifically, he felt that pedestrians had a longer stretch to cross with a roundabout, and that they had to wait for a gap in traffic to cross. With a conventional intersection, pedestrians can cross with a signal. Chairman Sinha's concern is that drivers in West Lafayette, in general, do not provide pedestrians with the right of way.

Mr. Grenard agreed that education was a key element in the use of roundabouts. In general, in one-lane roundabouts, there are three to four times less pedestrian-related accidents than at conventional intersections, but drivers must be educated in roundabout use and the notion that pedestrians have the right of way. Mr. Buck reminded the commission that, by city ordinance, pedestrians have the right of way. This is an enforceable city code.

NEXT MEETING: 5:00 pm, Wednesday, January 17, 2007. Please note, there will be NO DECEMBER MEETING.

Respectfully Submitted,



David M. Buck, P.E.
City Engineer

DMB/wf